

NEWTON YOUTH COMMISSION Meeting

December 6, 2006 MINUTES
Location: Newton City Hall Cafeteria

Present: Joe DeVito (chair), Matt Green, Peter Harrington, Joanne Kazarian, Lisa Langone, Officer Jim O'Loughlin, Stephanie Pelkowsky, Stephen Ross, Terance Sack, Students: Brandon Harris, Sarah Laski, Kira Mascho, Katie Sanders

Regrets: Anthony Bibbo, Richard Dyer, Donna Gordon, Kipaya Kapiga, Robert Staulo

Staff: Beverly Droz, Director, Human and Volunteer Services

The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm.

Introductions were made around the table.

Minutes of the November 1, 2006 meeting were accepted.

Treasurer's Report:

Bev reported that the bill for using City Hall for Autumn Invasion still has not arrived, but she expects it to be around \$500. We used up our existing supply of paper goods so we'll need to allow money to purchase those items for next year's event.

Revolving account: With the deposit of \$92.50 submitted on 11/2/06 from both Autumn Invasion and additional water bottles sold at City Hall, the balance is \$316.52. Bev has collected another \$43 from water bottles sales and will submit that for deposit this week.

Booklet:

Bev handed out the initial Draft copy of the Drinking & Drugs Prevention booklet that is being revived and revised. She asked everyone to look at it for substance, content and topics – not for typos and lay-out. Her administrator, Denise Joseph, has done an excellent job of coordinating the updating of this resource. Denise has met with several Youth Commission members including Matt Green, Lisa Langone and had input from Richard Dyer and Officer O'Loughlin. She has also met with the high school counselors, other agencies, and has research a lot of information from the internet. We are grateful to the Newton Public School's Project INTERFACE and Director Margaret Hannah who is paying for a professional writer to help us. As mentioned at the November meeting, additional topics have been added given the new issues parents face in today's day and age. The goal is to have a 2nd draft for the Dec. 13 Youth Interagency Task Force meeting. Then we'll continue the revision process through December and prepare to go to print in early January. We want the booklet ready for Project INTERFACE's Jan. 18 forum on Drinking, Drugs & Depression.

Katie and Kira brought in quotes by high school students about advice for parents from the teens themselves. This will be a good addition. All members were encouraged to provide additional feedback as soon as possible.

Other Business:

Officer O'Loughlin reported that he and 25 NSHS went to Norfolk Prison and met with young people who are imprisoned who shared with the students the bad decisions they made and how it

had changed their life. It was a very powerful experience and he reminded the Commission that it is important that parents teach their teens the consequences of their actions because bad decisions result in unfortunate life changing experiences, such as prison time.

Stephanie brought up the “Safe Homes” program which was designed for parents and students to sign a contract that says they won’t have drugs & alcohol at their home gatherings. Then there is a list of households and phones that parents can share so they know that a party is being held in a “Safe Home” – or not. It’s a voluntary program and it use to exist in Newton. The Commission agreed it would be a worthwhile program to have throughout the City. She’ll try to find more information about the current status of this program.

Student Commissioners will be needed from NNHS for next year. Peter asked Brandon for contacts and he suggested contacting Jim D’Arazio (2008 housemaster) and Mark Aronson (2007 housemaster).

Peter said the Newton Library is looking for students to work on their Advisory Board. He’ll get more information.

FCD

Donna will coordinate the seminar at NSHS and will go through Jeanne White for NNHS.

Fundraising:

- Kira and Katie sold water bottles at Sports Award Night.
- Stephanie suggested that youth design Youth Commission T-shirts and they could be sold.
- The students will put together a calendar of possible events where the kids can fundraise.

Programs:

Joe reported that he attended the 12/13/06 Internet Safety program by Chris Fortunato. Rick Dyer also went. Chris did an excellent presentation with a contract similar to SADD contract. About 35 parents were there. There was a lot of discussion about current internet sites like “My Space”. Joe would like to see how the Youth Commission could present internet safety information to middle school parents. Peter suggests we use the PTSO network. Officer Dave Spiro and Rich Catrambone will be making a larger presentation in the near future.

Youth Foundation Report:

Joe has submitted Articles of Incorporation to the City’s Law Department. Catherine Farrell said they will issue an opinion letter probably by end of December.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:05pm.

The next meeting will be on January 3 at 7pm in the City Hall Cafeteria.